(d) if not, the reasons for delay and by when the target is expected to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) During the last three years, *i.e.,* 2005-06,2006-07 and 2007-08, the public sector oil marketing companies (OMCs), *viz.* Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOC), Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPC) and Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPC) have opened 247 Retail Outlet (RO) dealerships on National Highways/State Highways in the State of Uttar Pradesh. The year-wise details are as under:

Year	Number of ROs
2005-06	114
2006-07	74
2007-08	59

(b) to (d) Subsequent to the dismantling of the Administered Pricing Mechanism (APM) *w.e.f.* 1.4.2002, OMCs have freedom to choose locations for opening of RO dealerships as per their commercial considerations and select the dealers in accordance with the objective and transparent guidelines framed by them. Government have no direct role in the allotment of RO dealerships by OMCs.

Recruitment of GTs on ONGC

4263. SHRI PRAVEEN RASTRAPAL: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the method of making direct recruitment of Graduate Trainee (G.T.) Batch Officers in Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC);

(b) how many G.T. Batch Officers were recruited during 1999 to 2007, year-wise, region-wise; and

(c) what is the monthly salary paid to such officers on recruitment during 2001 to 2007?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) In ONGC all Graduate Trainee (GT) officers are recruited through All India Open Competition comprising of written test and interview.

In its efforts to recruit the best and in view of the talent crunch, the Company also goes in for campus recruitment in prestigious and reputed institutes to select outstanding candidates.

(b) Details of GT batch Officers recruited during 1999—2007 are as under:—

Year	No. of GTs recruited
1999	292
2000	72
2001	232
2002	61
2003	359

Year	No. of GTs recruited
2004	263
2005	21
2006	321
2007	294

(c) GTs selected for appointment in ONGC during 2001 to 2007 were paid an initial pay of Rs. 12000/- per month in the pay scale of Rs. 12000-17500/- besides usual allowances and perquisities, as applicable.

In 2005 batch some GTs were paid consolidated stipend of Rs. 17000/- per month. Subsequently, their services were regularized from the date of their joining. Thereafter, recruitment of GTs on consolidated stipend basis has been discontinued.

Projects of IGL

†4264. DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board has directed Indraprastha Gas Ltd. (IGL) to discontinue development projects for the time being;

(b) if so, the details thereof and whether reasons have been cited by the above Board for issuing of the said order;

(c) whether implementation of the above direction would affect work of several projects; and

(d) if so, the names of these projects and amount so far spent thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRID1NSHA J. PATEL): (a) Yes, Sir. Petroleum & Natural Gas Regulatory Board (PNGRB) has directed Indraprastha Gas Limited (IGL) not to undertake any new or incremental activity/activities relating to laying, building, operating or expanding City or Local Natural Gas Distribution Networks without prior authorization of the Board unless there are any specific directions from any Courts to undertake any new or incremental activity or activities in any particular city or local area.

(b) The Board has conveyed to IGL that the information furnished by IGL does not establish that IGL was authorized by the Central Government at any time before the appointed date (October 1, 2007) in terms of Section 17(2) of PNGRB Act, 2006.

(c) and (d) Implementation of the above direction would affect the supply of gas to prospective customers. IGL is taking up the issue with the Board.

Fire at Bombay High

4265. SHRI TAPAN KUMAR SEN:

SHRI PRASANTA CHATTERJEE:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any study has been conducted by Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC)

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.